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*Full
Annual
Report*

Branch Chief: ☒ Ext. 671 Branch/Desk: SE-1 Project Crypto: HTNEIGH
 Case Officer: ☒ Ext. 8366 Target Area: Albania Base: *New York*

Type of Project: FP

Funding Mechanism			Approvals			
I	Direct	Subsidy	Date	Authority	FY	Amount
	Contractual	Proprietary				
	Pur. Services					
FY	Fiscal Review		Priority (A-E)	New Limitation?	Cr. to FP Res	
53	Authority		Branch Chief			
53	Obligations		COP			
54	Fm Request					
54	August Ceiling		COP			
54	New ID/P-Directed Allotment Ceiling					

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 CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
 SOURCES/METHOD/EXEMPTION 3B2B
 NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
 DATE 2007

Brief Description of Project and Notes-----

I. OBJECTIVE

The National Committee for Free Albania was created by the British and American Services in the summer of 1949 to serve as a front for covert activities and as a rallying point for anti-Communist elements among Albanian refugees and inside Albania. The objective of Project HTNEIGH is to maintain the NCFA as an overt vehicle for CIA's FP and FM covert operations against Albania.

II. ASSETS REPRESENTED BY PROJECT HTNEIGH

A. The NCFA, a representative group of Albanian refugees acting as the focal point for exiles interested in the ultimate liberation of Albania, provides an overt agency for the covert activities of CIA. Through propaganda media the NCFA publicizes the plight of the captive Albanian people and fosters the spirit of passive resistance within the country. Activities carried on in its name include:

1. Publishing of the NCFA newspaper (Shqipëria) on a semi-monthly basis in Albanian, and a digest of Shqipëria ~~once~~ *twice* a month for use in air drops over Albania.

2. Publishing of the Albanian News Letter, a bulletin printed irregularly in English, French and Italian and distributed to the major press bureaus.

3. Preparation of texts for propaganda leaflets (see Project OBTUSE).

4. Preparation of scripts for clandestine radio broadcasts (see Project HIGRUBBY).

5. Operation of a mail campaign of "poison pen" letters to ranking Communist leaders in Albania.

6. Liaison with other exile groups, particularly those associated with the National Committee for Free Europe, and participation in activities such as the Free Jurists congresses.

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7. Ministering

7. Ministering to the needs of destitute Albanian refugees in Southern Europe and the Near East.

8. Agent recruiting and infiltration operations; organization and resistance networks (see Project OBHUNT).

9. Interrogation of refugees.

B. Two members of the NCFA Executive Committee maintain the Committee headquarters in New York, where they are affiliated with the other emigre committees which make up the National Committee for Free Europe; they are guided by a CIA covert consultant. Propaganda headquarters is located in Rome, where an American and a British liaison officer jointly provide guidance for propaganda activities.

C. Periodicals published in the name of the NCFA are edited by the CIA and MI-6 liaison officers who are attached to the NCFA propaganda headquarters in Rome; U.S. and British policy with respect to Albania is followed. The newspaper and the news bulletin provide outlets for propaganda items we wish publicized. Such items can be picked up and published in the next issue of either the newspaper or the news bulletin. The digest of Shqipëria affords a method of getting the same items to the Albanian people within two to three weeks. The clandestine radio broadcasts can carry any message desired to the Albanian population.

D. When it is possible to sponsor a successful coup d'etat, the NCFA, representing as it does the majority of anti-Communist refugees and the main tribes and nationalist elements within Albania, can provide an interim government until a permanent government acceptable to the West can be established.

III. CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF OPERATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS SUPPORTING THIS OBJECTIVE

A. When the NCFA was formed in 1949 by the American and British Services only those Albanians considered untainted by collaboration with a totalitarian regime, and acceptable to the State Department and the British Foreign Office, were invited to join. Excluded was the BKI, leaders of which had collaborated closely with the Italians, although it represented the large Catholic population of Albania and the largest and most influential tribes in Northern Albania. At the time of its formation, the NCFA was regarded by Albanian refugee circles as a representative, democratic body which would further the interests of all anti-Communist Albanians. By November 1950 one of the major political parties represented in the NCFA, the Balli Kombetar, had split; the dissident faction, calling itself the Balli Kombetar Organization, also withdrew from the NCFA. The scission in the BK and the self interest displayed by the various members of the NCFA lowered its prestige and reduced its appeal to Albanians both abroad and within the country. It was decided that a broader base was desirable and efforts were made to include an uncompromised member of the BKI on a personal, not party, basis and a representative of the BKO in the NCFA. However, intransigent members of the NCFA steadfastly refused to accept the broadening; attempts to force the issue were discontinued for fear the threatened withdrawal of leading members of the BK would cause the complete break-up of the Committee. It has now been decided to accept this risk and, following agreement with the British, the question of broadening will again be broached and pushed through.

B. In spite

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B. In spite of the political difficulties within the Committee itself, the PP and PM activities carried out in its name are regarded as successful. Through the radio broadcasts, the leaflet drops, and agent operations the Committee has established itself in the eyes of the Albanian people as the recognized leader of Albanian resistance. The NCFA has provided adequate cover for CIA's clandestine operations.

IV. STATEMENT OF NEGATIVE DEVELOPMENTS

When the NCFA was established the maximum objective of the Albanian project was the overthrow of the Albanian regime. Changes in the international situation resulted in a modification of the objectives. Through continuous review with the State Department, the British Foreign Office and the British Service, our activities have been adjusted to fit current conditions and at present are aimed only at harassing the Hoxha regime; maintaining the hope of eventual liberation and preparing the people psychologically for eventual active resistance; and creating and fostering a skeleton resistance organization to be used as the foundation of a liberation movement when such an operation appears politically and strategically desirable. All of these activities are conducted in the name of the NCFA and substantial sums of money have been expended in the expectation that official U.S. and British policy would ultimately permit an attempted coup d'etat. A thorough review in the summer of 1953 again resulted in a decision not to sponsor such action in the immediate future and Albanian operations will be conducted accordingly. Recent budget cuts will be reflected in Project MTNEIGH and the considerable amounts of money formerly spent on such matters as welfare for indigent Albanians in Italy and Greece, support of Albanians whose usefulness and contribution to NCFA activities is questionable, and entertainment will be sharply reduced.

V. ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATE METHODS OF ATTAINING OBJECTIVES WITH GREATER ECONOMY OF EFFORT

While it is conceivable that our propaganda activities could be carried out without the actual existence of an Albanian Committee, it is doubtful that this method would be satisfactory or successful. In spite of its shortcomings and the dissension which exists between the various political factions, the NCFA has established a reputation as the Albanian emigre organization acknowledged by the Western Powers as representative of the largest political groupings inside Albania. It is an open secret that the NCFA receives Western financial support. Refugee and agent debriefings indicate that the NCFA is well known within Albania through the leaflet program, word of mouth, and agent contacts. Should financial support of the NCFA cease and the Committee be disbanded this news would reach the Albanian communities abroad in the time it takes air mail to be delivered. Albanians are inveterate and prolific letter writers with little or no sense of security; an incessant correspondence is maintained among emigres in all countries, including Yugoslavia, and even to some extent with Albania itself. Although mail is censored and the communications system in Albania is primitive, news travels fast by grapevine methods; it is believed that any national committee would soon be exposed, not only to emigres but to the populace inside Albania, and propaganda purportedly issued by a no-longer-existent NCFA would do more harm than good. Furthermore, the fact that the NCFA had ceased to receive Western backing undoubtedly would become known to the Tirana regime and would be fully publicized, adding further difficulties to the operational task.

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Although the Legalitet Party, which advocates the return of ex-King Zog to the throne, is represented on the NCFA, Zog himself has remained aloof both from the Legalitet Party and the NCFA's activities. However, he has covertly supplied CIA with agents and has instructed his followers to support our position when differences arose in the Committee. We could transfer our support from a committee of representatives of the several political parties to Zog. Such a move, however, is regarded as undesirable, since Zog is by no means universally liked in Albania and sponsorship of his return to Albania would violate our policy in favor of a government freely chosen by democratic vote.

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